

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

STRATEGIC PLAN

FY1997 - FY2002

I MISSION

The mission of the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is to protect the safety and health of the Nation's miners. The Mine Act requires MSHA to establish and determine compliance with Federal safety and health standards through inspections and investigations, and to work cooperatively with the mining industry, labor, and the States to improve training programs aimed at preventing accidents and occupationally-caused diseases.

II VISION

The first priority and concern of everyone in the mining community must be the health and safety of its most precious resource--the miner. Deaths and serious injuries from unsafe and unhealthful conditions in mines are unacceptable. MSHA remains committed to its efforts to bring about reductions in fatalities, injuries, and illnesses by pursuing the steps outlined in this Strategic Plan. Achieving this outcome requires a flexible and responsive organization with the capabilities to address constantly changing health and safety challenges efficiently and effectively in an era of limited resources. By achieving its strategic goals and objectives, MSHA will enhance its position as the leading authority on mine safety and health in the world.

The mining environment has been and continues to be a potentially hazardous place to work. Constant vigilance on the part of the mine operators and miners is required to mitigate the conditions that cause accidents, injuries and illnesses. MSHA will strive to find new ways to improve working conditions in the Nation's mines.

III STRATEGIC GOALS

FY 1997 Summary

The strategic goals and performance objectives in this plan address the persistent safety and health problems that exist in the mining industry today. In FY 1997, MSHA worked to reduce miners' injuries and overexposures to health hazards by strengthening existing programs, developing and implementing special emphasis initiatives, and enhancing education and training outreach. These efforts formed the basis for setting the performance objectives each year through FY 2002.

Departmental Goal: Safe, Healthy and Equal Opportunity Workplace

Agency Strategic Goal: Reduce injuries in the Nation's mines.

Performance goals/objectives (outcomes):

- C Reduce the industry nonfatal-days-lost incidence rate to below the average number recorded for the previous five years for all mines.
- C Reduce the number of fatalities to below the average recorded for the previous five years in the top three categories of accidents (haulage, roof fall, and machinery).

Strategies that will be used to achieve goals:

- C Mitigate the factors that delay rulemaking by: expanding public participation early in the rulemaking process, including the best evidence available to support the rule, looking more closely at the interrelated impact of regulations from multiple agencies, increasing the number of alternatives considered during the review and development of regulations, and acquiring the expertise necessary to address complex issues.
- C Inspect every underground mine at least four times and every surface mine at least two times each year to determine compliance with safety standards.
- C Increase targeted inspection activities.
- C Enhance problem-solving (e.g., root cause identification) and trend analysis to address persistent problem areas.
- C Increase effective collection of civil penalties.
- C Improve education and training through verification of student ability to perform training objectives and greater use of new methods of providing training.
- C Increase partnership agreements that enlist mine operator cooperation in accident prevention.
- C Direct informational outreach programs to focus attention on high incidence accident causes.
- C Establish a user-friendly, public database that contains information needed by the mining industry and other interest groups, such as statistical data on fatalities, accidents, injuries, and health sampling.
- C Reduce the reporting burden on industry by implementing electronic submission of information, reducing/eliminating some information collection requirements, and establishing an industry feedback mechanism on the Internet. This provides industry with more time to comply with reporting requirements and faster turn-around of information as well as promoting a cooperative environment between government and industry.

- C Further establish baseline data on accidents and injuries.
- C Timely approval/certification of mining equipment.

Enablers that help accomplish strategic goals:

- C The inspection of mines is one of MSHA's major responsibilities, which is supported directly by the bulk of its Program Activities. The Program Activities that will be responsible for achieving this goal are Coal, Metal/Nonmetal, Standards Development, Assessments, Educational Policy and Development, and Technical Support.
- C The Strategic Plan will be electronically disseminated throughout the Agency.
- C Program Activity managers will be held accountable by the Assistant Secretary for MSHA, who in turn will be accountable to the Secretary of Labor.
- C No new legislation is required to accomplish this goal and no restructuring of current legislation is presently foreseen.

Key External Factors that may affect performance:

- C An ever-changing work environment where hazardous conditions eliminated one day can reoccur the next, or where one hazard is corrected, and another may appear. To address this factor, MSHA plans to enhance its education and training outreach efforts to promote hazard awareness and increase hazard targeting activities at mine sites.
- C Business decisions or product demand adversely impact the workplace (e.g., "cutting corners" to reduce costs; an expanding market resulting in the hiring of less experienced workforce.) MSHA's plans will reflect any needed increases in inspections at mines experiencing increased production to ensure compliance with safety and health standards, including new miner training requirements. Hazard awareness and targeted activities will be used to discourage "cutting corners".

Departmental Goal: Safe, Healthy and Equal Opportunity Workplace

Agency Strategic Goal: Reduce miners' overexposure to health hazards.

Performance goals/objectives (outcomes):

- C Increase the percentage of personal exposures in compliance with the permissible level for noise in metal/nonmetal mines by 2%.

- C Increase the percentage of personal exposures for the 5 highest risk occupations in metal/nonmetal mines that are in compliance with the permissible exposure level for crystalline silica by 2%. (The occupations are bagger, stone cutter, laborer, crusher operator, and driller.)
- C Increase the percent of samples in compliance with the respirable coal mine dust standard as measured by MSHA sampling policy by 2%.
- C Increase the percentage of mines in compliance with the new health standard for diesel particulates by 2%.
- C Reduce the abatement time for silica overexposures in metal/nonmetal mines by 2%.

Strategies that will be used to achieve goals:

- C Mitigate the factors that delay rulemaking by: expanding public participation early in the rulemaking process, including the best evidence available to support the rule, looking more closely at the interrelated impact of regulations from multiple agencies, increasing the number of alternatives considered during the review and development of regulations, and acquiring the expertise necessary to address complex issues.
- C Increase targeted inspection activities.
- C Increase sampling presence in mines with excessive dust levels.
- C Decrease time between evaluations of mine ventilation systems.
- C Revise existing standards and policies for respirable coal mine dust and crystalline silica.
- C Revise noise exposure standards based on engineering and administrative controls.
- C Propose new rules on limiting exposure to diesel particulates in underground mines.
- C Enhance problem-solving and trend analysis to address persistent problems.
- C Increase effective collection of civil penalties.
- C Direct informational outreach programs to occupations with a high incidence of overexposures to airborne contaminants and physical agents, with particular attention to dust, noise, and diesel particulates.

- C Increase partnership agreements that enlist mine operator cooperation in accident prevention.
- C Further establish baseline data on dust, crystalline silica and noise exposure, and create new database for diesel particulate.
- C Improve education and training through verification of student ability to perform training objectives and greater use of new methods of providing training.

Enablers that help accomplish strategic goals:

- C MSHA's conducts sampling of various airborne contaminants and physical agents and cites mines for violations of mandatory health standards. This goal will be accomplished by the bulk of its Program Activities, including Coal, Metal/Nonmetal, Standards Development, Assessments, Educational Policy and Development, and Technical Support. Program Administration will provide support to the other Program Activities.
- C The Strategic Plan will be electronically disseminated throughout the Agency.
- C Program Activity managers will be held accountable by the Assistant Secretary for MSHA who in turn will be accountable to the Secretary of Labor.
- C No new legislation is required to accomplish this goal and no restructuring of current legislation is presently foreseen.

Key External Factors that may affect performance:

- C An ever-changing work environment where hazardous conditions eliminated one day can reoccur the next, or where one hazard is corrected, and another may appear. To address this factor, MSHA plans to enhance its education and training outreach efforts to promote hazard awareness and increase hazard targeting activities at mine sites.
- C Business decisions or product demand adversely impact the workplace (e.g. "cutting corners" to reduce costs; an expanding market resulting in the hiring of less experienced workforce.) MSHA's plans will reflect any needed increases in inspections at mine operations experiencing increased production to ensure compliance with safety and health standards including new miner training requirements.

IV RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOALS IN THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN AND IN THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The goals established in the annual performance plan are linked to each of the Agency's program activities and will support the two strategic goals--assuring safe and healthy working conditions in the Nation's mines. The goals in the annual performance plan are intermediate steps on the path toward achieving the long-term goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan and show the role of each MSHA activity in the overall effort to accomplish the Agency's mission. See Section VIII to see the year by year measures that need to be achieved.

V STAKEHOLDERS

MSHA's external stakeholders include: Congress, miners and mine operators, independent contractors who perform work on mine property, manufacturers who sell equipment and products for use in mines, labor and trade organizations representing miners and the mining industry, persons who provide services such as training for miners or emergency rescue capabilities to mines, States that participate in MSHA's State Grant program and academia.

MSHA has and will continue to hold meetings with interest groups in the mining community to clearly identify their expectations and concerns and implement changes which will result in positive measurable outcomes. This will be accomplished through regional and national forums, as well as rule making hearings in the mining community. Efforts will be focused on using the Internet as a feedback mechanism with the mining community (see Section V on strategies) and the information gained will be used to update future revisions of this Strategic Plan.

MSHA's internal stakeholders, primarily its supervisors and employees, provided input through the Program Activity leadership.

VI PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

The current Strategic Plan is based on MSHA's evaluation of its strategies and how those strategies have impacted the accident and injury rates over the past several years. MSHA listens to the stakeholders through regular meetings and face-to-face discussions. These evaluations are performed on a continual basis to understand program strengths and weaknesses and to determine alternative courses of action. MSHA has an extensive data base of information that is available to the mine operators, miners and the public. The data base includes information on fatalities and injuries and is broken down for each state by type of mine and the cause. This information is constantly examined for trends, especially high incidence type injuries, illnesses, or hazardous conditions where MSHA needs to dedicate its resources. For the immediate future, we will evaluate our programs quarterly to see if the budgetary funding and strategic goals and objectives are in alignment. The initial evaluation will occur early in FY 1998 after the FY 1998 funding is approved by Congress.

VII DEPARTMENTAL STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

There are several cross-cutting management issues that affect MSHA and are detailed in the following sections under Financial Management, Information Technology Linkages, and Human Resources.

VII-A FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

MSHA maintains internal controls on all operations and functions throughout the agency and reacts quickly to rectify any problem areas that arise. The Inspector General identified one high risk area in the assessment of fines. To correct this weakness MSHA intends to institute the Assessment Data Base Management System that will link its assessment system to MSHA's financial system.

In the area of legislative requirements and operation standards, MSHA is currently working with the Department of Labor to institute the Managerial Cost Accounting System Requirements that will target agency cost to results.

VII-B INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY LINKAGES

The following Information Technology goals that are part of the MSHA Information Technology Plan provide primary support to both of the strategic goals in the MSHA Strategic Plan:

Enhance public access to MSHA data and information by using the Internet to the maximum extent possible.

Migrate MSHA's mainframe computer systems to a common platform that is consistent with the Department of Labor information architecture.

Achieve consistency with Federal, Departmental and MSHA information architectures to maximize interoperability and data sharing both within and outside the Department of Labor.

The following Information Technology goals provide secondary support to both the strategic goals in the MSHA Strategic Plan:

Complete the steps necessary for MSHA to be Year 2000 compliant by the end of CY1998.

Evaluate and improve MSHA's communications infrastructure to ensure the most effective use of technology and to provide every MSHA employee with access to the full range of network services.

Provide MSHA employees with ready access to common administrative and programmatic data appropriate to their needs.

Help employees reach the intermediate proficiency level in any software product or application they use daily.

MSHA has a significant data base and collection system that captures most of the information necessary to track the goals in its Strategic Plan. The next step is to establish the baselines to measure progress. The nonfatal-days-lost incidence rate used in the first strategic goal has been

collected for many years and the data base is well established. The baseline will be based on FY 1998 and the subsequent years performance will be evaluated against the overall average for FY 1998. For the second strategic goal, related to the health of miners, the compliance rates of metal/nonmetal mines and coal mines with the current health standards for noise overexposure and dust/silica overexposure are well established. Baselines will also be established for these indicators during FY 1998. Data is not currently collected on diesel particulates. The cost and impact of setting up the data base for diesel particulates will be determined during the finalization of the new standard and will be included in future updates of the Strategic Plan. Abatement time for silica overexposure in the metal/nonmetal mines will require further refinement in MSHA data collection process. This improvement has already been programmed for FY 1998.

VII-C HUMAN RESOURCES

MSHA will not make any significant changes in its organizational structure to accomplish its strategic goals. The numbers and types of occupations that make up the Agency for FY 1997 are as follows:

<u>Job Classification</u>	<u>Number</u>
Clerical	372
Engineering	222
Industrial Hygienist	29
Mine Inspectors	950
Training Instructors	39
All Others	<u>586</u>
FY 1997 Total	2198

The skill mix is currently being adjusted by hiring additional Industrial Hygienists to balance MSHA's focus on health with its traditional strong focus on safety.

MSHA has made a firm commitment to achieve greater diversity throughout its work force. The Agency will continue to work toward overcoming underrepresentation of minorities and women, which is hindered by the low representation of these groups in the private sector mining industry from which MSHA draws its inspectors. The Agency is working to establish pipelines with universities and colleges to recruit entry level people and will use this opportunity to attract more minorities and women as well as an aggressive outreach effort in other recruitment efforts.

MSHA does not foresee any issues arising from the goals of this Strategic Plan that would impact labor relations. The unions are expected to support efforts to increase the safety and health of the miner.

VIII PERFORMANCE MEASURES MATRIX

The following matrices provide the Departmental goal, the Agency strategic goal, the performance measures/objectives and the supporting performance measures/indicators for each year of the Strategic Plan:

PERFORMANCE MEASURES MATRIX

Departmental Goal: Safe, Healthy and Equal Opportunity Workplace	
Agency Strategic Goal: Reduce injuries in the Nation's mines.	
Performance Goals/Objectives	Performance Measures/Indicators
Reduce the industry nonfatal-days-lost incidence rate to below the average number recorded for the previous five years for all mines.	
By the end of FY 1997,	Establish baseline on injuries
By the end of FY 1998,	Number falls below the FY93 - FY97 average
By the end of FY 1999,	Number falls below the FY94 - FY98 average
By the end of FY 2000,	Number falls below the FY95 - FY99 average
By the end of FY 2001,	Number falls below the FY96 - FY00 average
By the end of FY 2002,	Number falls below the FY97 - FY01 average
Reduce the number of fatalities to below the average number recorded for the previous five years in the top three categories of accidents (haulage, roof fall, and machinery).	
By the end of FY 1997,	Establish baseline average
By the end of FY 1998,	Number falls below the FY93 - FY97 average
By the end of FY 1999,	Number falls below the FY94 - FY98 average
By the end of FY 2000,	Number falls below the FY95 - FY99 average
By the end of FY 2001,	Number falls below the FY96 - FY00 average
By the end of FY 2002,	Number falls below the FY97 - FY01 average

PERFORMANCE MEASURES MATRIX

Departmental Goal: Safe, Healthy and Equal Opportunity Workplace	
Agency Strategic Goal: Reduce miners' overexposure to health hazards.	
Performance Goals/Objectives	Performance Measures/Indicators
<p>Increase the percentage of personal exposures in compliance with the permissible level for noise in metal/nonmetal mines by 2%.</p> <p>By the end of FY 1997,</p> <p>By the end of FY 1998,</p> <p>By the end of FY 1999,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2000,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2001,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2002,</p>	<p>Review database</p> <p>Establish baseline for noise exposures</p> <p>By .5%</p> <p>By 1%</p> <p>By 1.5%</p> <p>By 2%</p>
<p>Increase the percentage of personal exposures for the highest risk occupations in metal/nonmetal mines that are in compliance with the permissible exposure level for silica by 2%.</p> <p>By the end of FY 1997,</p> <p>By the end of FY 1998,</p> <p>By the end of FY 1999,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2000,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2001,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2002,</p>	<p>Review database</p> <p>Establish baseline for silica</p> <p>By .5%</p> <p>By 1%</p> <p>By 1.5%</p> <p>By 2%</p>

PERFORMANCE MEASURES MATRIX

Departmental Goal: Safe, Healthy and Equal Opportunity Workplace	
Agency Strategic Goal: Reduce miners' overexposure to health hazards.	
Performance Goals/Objectives	Performance Measures/Indicators
<p>Increase the percent of samples in compliance with the respirable coal mine dust standard as measured by MSHA sampling policy by 2%.</p> <p>By the end of FY 1997,</p> <p>By the end of FY 1998,</p> <p>By the end of FY 1999,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2000,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2001,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2002,</p>	<p>Review database</p> <p>Establish baseline for respirable dust</p> <p>By .5%</p> <p>By 1%</p> <p>By 1.5%</p> <p>By 2%</p>
<p>Increase the percentage of mines in compliance with the new health standard for diesel particulates by 2%.</p> <p>By the end of FY 1997,</p> <p>By the end of FY 1998,</p> <p>By the end of FY 1999,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2000,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2001,</p> <p>By the end of FY 2002,</p>	<p>Work on new standard for diesel particulates</p> <p>Propose health standard for diesel particulates</p> <p>Finalize health standard for diesel particulates</p> <p>MSHA distributes information on requirement</p> <p>Establish baseline data for diesel particulates</p> <p>By 2%</p>

PERFORMANCE MEASURES MATRIX

Departmental Goal: Safe, Healthy and Equal Opportunity Workplace	
Agency Strategic Goal: Reduce miners' overexposure to health hazards.	
Performance Goals/Objectives	Performance Measures/Indicators
Reduce the abatement time for silica overexposure by 2% in the metal/nonmetal mines.	
By the end of FY 1997,	Establish procedures for abatement time regarding silica overexposures
By the end of FY 1998,	Change computer system
By the end of FY 1999,	Establish baseline for abatement time
By the end of FY 2000,	By 1%
By the end of FY 2001,	By 1.5%
By the end of FY 2002,	By 2%